



**STATE OF MISSOURI
TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN'S JUSTICE**

ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2024

EIN: 44-6000987

UEI: LFNCGSDCDYN3

CHILDREN'S JUSTICE ACT TASK FORCE COORDINATOR:

CARI POINTER, CARI.A.POINTER@DSS.MO.GOV

CHILDREN'S JUSTICE ACT TASK FORCE FISCAL LIAISON:

ARLENE DAMRON, ARLENE.DAMRON@DSS.MO.GOV

MISSOURI CHILDREN'S DIVISION

205 JEFFERSON ST.

JEFFERSON CITY, MO, 65101

REPORT CONTENTS

1	Task Force Overview	Page 2
2	Statement of Needs	Page 4
3	2023 Priorities	Page 5
4	Connected Initiatives	Page 8
5	2023 Fund Allocation	Page 12
6	Proposed 2024 Activities	Page 17
7	Attachments	Page 22

1. OVERVIEW

HISTORY

Establishment and Maintenance of Task Force (Sections 107(b)(2) and 107(c)(1) of the Act): The Missouri Task Force on Children's Justice was established under the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 1991. Each state receiving CAPTA funding is required to maintain a state multi-disciplinary task force on children's justice. Missouri's Task Force is comprised of 21 members representing most urban and metropolitan jurisdictions, as well as rural locations in the State, and includes law enforcement, judges and attorneys involved in both civil and criminal child abuse and neglect proceedings, child advocates, court appointed special advocates (CASA), health and mental health professionals, individuals representing child protective service agencies, individuals experienced in working with children with disabilities, parents, adult former victims of child abuse and or neglect, and individuals experienced in working with homeless children and youth, as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a).

FOCUS

The responsibility of the Task Force is to assist the State in developing, establishing, and operating programs designed to improve child welfare; in particular, the handling of child abuse and neglect cases, the handling of child abuse related fatalities, the prosecution of child abuse cases, particularly sexual abuse, and the handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health related problems. In order to accomplish its mission, the Task Force reviews child welfare laws, policies and practices, and reports of serious child abuse and child fatalities, for the purposes of recommending improvements and providing funding to support programs that address these recommendations.

The Task Force is charged with the oversight and distribution of Children's Justice Act (CJA) federal grant money and reformation of policy and state laws related to the improvement of the investigative response to child abuse and neglect and the reduction of trauma to child victims.

STRUCTURE

The Task Force meets quarterly to review and discuss activities to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse and exploitation, and cases involving suspected child maltreatment-related fatalities. In addition to meeting quarterly, the Task Force, via the use of subcommittees, holds in-person meetings and conference calls, reviews policy, and tracks and evaluates proposed legislation.

Table 1 outlines the Task Force structure with each committee and its specific role as well as its 2023 accomplishments. In 2023, the Task Force maintained twenty-one members, each serving a term of four years, with the possibility of serving up to three consecutive terms. Attachment A

details the names, titles, designations of disciplines, and brief descriptions of the relevant experience of the Task Force members that participated in 2023.

Table 1. Committee Structure

Committee	Role	2023 Accomplishments
Recruitment Committee	Monitor the Task Force's membership to ensure it consists of a minimum of twenty-one members and represents the required disciplines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieved full membership in 2023. ▪ Recruited 2 new members to be approved in 2024.
Goal Committee	Maintain focus on the goals identified through the three-year assessment; review annual report to ensure alignment of grants to goals and requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launched an improved grant application and reporting process. ▪ Designed and implemented common outcome measures across grantees.
Finance Committee	Review grant applications, monitor expenditures, and evaluate the use of CJA funds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launched an improved grant application including a budget template. ▪ Reviewed and recommended grants; monitored expenditures.
Legislative Committee	Follow legislation pertinent to the Task Force; determine whether to pursue legislative proposals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussed relevant legislation that arose in 2023. ▪ Determined not to pursue policy proposals.
Critical Events Committee	Review critical events and determine if there are recommendations for systemic improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In process of transitioning to a new focus on statewide review across agencies/departments.

2. STATEMENT OF NEEDS

NEEDS

The Task Force on Children's Justice (Task Force) is responsible for providing stable, flexible, and ongoing funding to support efforts to improve the investigative approach and response to child abuse and neglect. Funding granted by the Task Force will assist the state in its efforts to expand training; expand services; provide better staff development opportunities and positive work environments; promote a positive image; and gain public support. These efforts will improve our ability to recruit, train, and retain staff; ultimately, it will enhance the state's ability to respond to child abuse and neglect in the most timely and effective manner.

In 2021-22, the Task Force partnered with the consulting firm WithInsight to conduct a three-year assessment. The process allowed us to identify the most pressing needs in our state. The report included both internal and external recommendations for the Task Force. The internal recommendations focused on the Task Force's internal processes related to grant making and its communication with grantees. The external recommendations captured the needs identified statewide to ensure an effective response to child abuse and neglect.

The following external recommendations were generated from the assessment and have been guiding our grant making:

1. Seek out and fund opportunities that address the most requested content outlined in the three-year assessment (e.g., Problematic Sexual Behaviors, Secondary Trauma, Human Trafficking, Local Team Building, MDT Facilitation).
2. Work with grantees to improve communication efforts to increase reach across the state and disciplines.
3. Partner with state and local law enforcement leaders to learn how to better engage law enforcement professionals.
4. Work with grantees and partner organizations to better understand why participation is lower in rural counties and how it could be bolstered. Explore the ideas generated in the assessment, including additional scholarships and virtual opportunities.

The assessment included the following internal recommendations to improve grant administration and evaluation:

1. Review the grant application and process and ensure the expectations are clear.
2. Develop a shared survey tool that grantees can implement to measure training outcomes.
3. Request that grantees report on a common set of outputs and outcomes that will allow the Task Force to better answer its evaluation questions.

The Missouri Task Force is committed to seeking out opportunities to fund projects that address these identified needs. In addition, the Task Force has worked on improving its internal processes, with significant progress made in 2023 (see 2023 priorities for more details).

3. 2023 PRIORITIES

Consistent with the requirements of section 107(e)(1), the Task Force's 2023 priorities are outlined below along with the activities completed/in progress by the Task Force and its subcommittees for the 12-month period preceding the date of submission.

A. Activities to Improve the Investigative, Administrative, and Judicial Handling of Cases.

1. The Task Force has continued to support the process of the investigation and prosecution by collaborating with the Missouri Office of Prosecution (MOPS) to fund trainings for MDT members such as Children's Division investigators, law enforcement and prosecutors. The Task Force not only provided funding for the Family Sexual Violence Conference and the Sexual Abuse Trial School, but also for foundational trainings offered across the state.
2. The Task Force supported the Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, by assisting in the funding of *ChildFirst®* programs, offering both an in-person and a virtual training course of child abuse investigation training. Priority was given to prosecutors, law enforcement, forensic interviewers, Children's Division staff and child advocacy center staff when allocating scholarships. The training assisted in the improvement of the investigative response to child sexual abuse by increasing the expertise of professionals addressing the investigation, treatment, and prosecution of cases of child sexual abuse. The Task Force will continue to support this endeavor as grant applications are submitted in 2024.

B. Steps to Establish Experimental, Model, or Demonstration Programs

1. The Task Force again sponsored the Children's Justice Act Show Me a Helping Hand conference in November 2023. CJA Task Force Member, Greg Holtmeyer, spearheaded the effort by co-organizing and speaking at the event on past childhood trauma. The focus included male sexual abuse, human trafficking, and past trauma. The target audience included counselors, therapists, law enforcement, Children's Division, schools, and other related professions. The conference was free to all attendees; we also provided free CEU and POST credit hours to qualified attendees and sponsored thirty-five hotel rooms for attendees.
2. The Task Force will continue to fund a multi-year MDT Enhancement Project with the Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, which is intended to build more highly functioning MDTs across the state that in turn will assist in the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect. The enhancement initiatives will likely lead to cases being referred and completed in a timelier manner as well as fewer cases falling through the cracks with teams working together more cohesively throughout the life of the case. A Project Manager was hired and four pilot sites were identified. Those sites are meeting monthly. MO-NACA updates the Task Force on progress bi-quarterly. At the November 2023 quarterly meeting, Jessica Seitz and Audrey Leonard from MO-NACA gave an update on the MDT Project. After a strategic planning phase that included various disciplines for input, the multi-year strategic plan which spans a 5-year and 10-year vision with 12-month priorities was developed. One of the 10-year goals is to have all of Missouri have dedicated and properly resourced MDT Facilitators. The pilot sites' role is to tend to the relationships of the MDT which is also required for accreditation with the CACs. They are already making huge strides on this goal. In addition, they have started to build out some of the

12-month priorities include the training ecosystem, team building opportunities, and the facilitator toolbox.

3. Task Force Member, Lindsey Parton and her team from Marshall Public Schools (MPS), presented on an innovative program called the “SAFE” (Seeking Acceptance for Everyone) program. During 20-21 school year, MPS identified over 200 students that were McKinney–Vento eligible and sought to develop programming for them. One program they have is “Stuff the Bus.” They park a school bus outside of Wal-Mart at the beginning of the school year so individuals can donate school supplies to students in need at MPS. Project Share brings together over 50 community organizations to provide access to medical, dental and vision services before school starts each year. Haircuts and school supplies are also available. Hoot Resource Center opened in 2016 to assist families with accessing home amenities while they may be in transition. It is in a house setting and offers food, laundry, hygiene products, computer access, resource referrals and case management. They created an online training module to train their staff at MPS on how to recognize and serve McKinney-Vento families. This is unique to MPS at this time, but they hope to be able to share so that other schools can input their own information to train their staff. It is interactive and easy for staff to use.

C. Activities to Reform State Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, Procedures or Protocols

The Task Force will continue to review Children’s Division policy and laws related to the investigation of child abuse and neglect. The following bill included homeless youth as defined as a “missing child” or “missing juvenile.”

SB 186:

MISSING CHILDREN (Sections 43.400, 43.401, & 210.795)

This act defines “missing child” or “missing juvenile” in the context of law enforcement searches to include a person who is under eighteen (18) years or who is in foster care regardless of the person’s age or who is an emancipated minor as defined in Section 302.178, a homeless youth as defined in Section 167.020, or an unaccompanied minor as defined in Section 210.121.

Any agency, placement provider, including the Children's Division, parent, or guardian, with the care and custody of a child who is missing shall file a missing child complaint with the appropriate law enforcement agency within two (2) hours of determining the child to be missing. This act further requires the case manager to document the report number and any relevant information in the child's record. The law enforcement agency shall immediately submit information on the missing child to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). The law enforcement agency shall institute a proper investigation and search for the missing child and maintain contact with the agency or placement provider making the complaint. The missing child's entry shall not be removed from any database or system until the child is found or the case is closed.

The act further requires the Division to inform and obtain information about the child's disappearance from the child's parents, known relatives, out-of-home caregivers, attorney, guardian or guardian ad litem, court appointed special advocate, juvenile officer, or Indian tribe, as applicable, or from any other person known to the Division who may have relevant information regarding the child's disappearance within twenty-four (24) hours of a report being made.

In 2023, an additional focus was to implement the internal recommendations from the three-year assessment. The Task Force continued to work with WithInsight to improve its grant application process and develop a shared measurement system across grantees. WithInsight hosted a

focus group with grantees to gather their feedback on the application process and identify a set of shared measures for trainings and conferences. Using the feedback, the Goal Committee edited the grant application and developed templates for grantees to use to better meet grant requirements. Starting in August 2023, the Task Force required grantees using funds to provide trainings and conferences to report on a common set of outputs and outcomes. We developed an example reporting template and sample survey they can utilize if needed. This will allow the Task Force to collate data across grantees and better understand the statewide reach and impact of the work.

4. CONNECTED INITIATIVES

The Task Force intentionally connects its work to other state initiatives. These strategic connections are detailed below for 2023.

Linkage to CFSR/CFSP

Kayla Ueligger, Children's Division, gave an update on Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) at the November 2023 quarterly meeting. For new members, Ms. Ueligger explained that the CFSR statewide assessment was a deep intricate look at the child welfare system in Missouri in its totality. The assessment has case specific factors as well as systemic factors that drive how we can improve child welfare on a larger spectrum. The CFSR team is in active planning for the CFSR findings and the Program Improvement Plan (PIP). As the teams dive into strategies about how to address systemic issues, Ms. Ueligger was eager to have Task Force members involved as they saw fit given their various positions in child welfare across the state. Some Task Force members are already involved with local PIP planning and are noting any gaps that can be identified and assisted by the Task Force. Task Force members Leanne Reese, Christopher Jensen and Lisa Mizell all participated in various state-wide assessment events.

Grant funding from CJA was used to support the CFSR in several different ways. Funding was used to provide incentive to encourage parents to participate in case-related interviews during the CFSR in July 2023. In addition to case-related interviews, parents who attended the CFSR stakeholder interviews with parents in person in Jefferson City were given a small stipend to assist with travel expenses. In November 2023, funds were used to provide a stipend for parents who were able to attend the PIP kick-off event.

Task Force member Leanne Reese sits on the CFSR Advisory Committee and attends multi-disciplinary meetings to discuss areas of improvement needed on the CFSR. Leanne is able to share information from the CFSR Advisory Committee to the rest of the Task Force. The Task Force discusses any needs identified and makes recommendations as necessary. Recommendations are then taken back to the CFSR Advisory Committee. The purpose of this collaborative advisory committee is twofold: first, to serve as a vehicle for cross-system collaboration to promote the achievement of better outcomes for the children, youth, and families; and second, to fulfill an ACF requirement for a collaborative process. Leanne also attended the PIP kick-off event.

Missouri is currently in the planning stages for the CFSP and conversations have included how we can involve more of our CJA members as part of the multi-disciplinary teams at either a local or statewide level. Once the CFSP has been completed, it will be shared with the Task Force to identify any assistance the Task Force could provide.

Linkage to Anti-Trafficking Efforts

Children's Division staff continue to expand their awareness of and response to concerns of human trafficking by developing local protocols within multi-disciplinary teams, collaborating with federal law enforcement agencies for assistance in investigating cases of suspected trafficking, participating in various local human trafficking task forces, and developing local procedures to address youth who run away from foster care.

The Children's Division has partnered with the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Texas Department of Public Safety to provide Interdiction for the Protection of Children Training (IPC) statewide. IPC is designed to provide expertise and investigative assistance on human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and child sex crime investigations to patrol officers. IPC training teaches officers what to look for during traffic stops and appropriate questions to ask children and adults. IPC opens communication between the Missouri Children's Division, Child Advocacy Centers, medical and mental health professionals, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to help identify if a child is in danger during a traffic stop.

Sex Trafficking Prevention Unit—Children's Division

As a result of recommendations from the Statewide Council on Sex Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children, the Children's Division formed the Sex Trafficking Prevention Unit in January of 2024. Children's Division staff Rachel Davis is the At-Risk Youth Program Coordinator for the unit. They are currently working to reduce the number of youth missing from care by assisting with recovery efforts and providing oversight, as well as developing run prevention strategies. These strategies will increase the ability to identify youth at risk of a run episode and intervene through the use of youth-driven support meetings and safety planning. In local areas with high rates of human trafficking, the unit will assist with the ongoing development of multi-disciplinary response protocols and meetings.

To supplement the already existing Advanced Human Trafficking curriculum for all staff, Children's Division will contract for additional training on human trafficking and missing youth to provide to resource providers, older youth, and alternative care frontline staff.

In addition, the unit will be assisting with the development of FFPFA distinction criteria for residential facilities specific to youth who been exploited or trafficked, and will assist with the development of human trafficking standards for all residential facilities contracted to provide services to youth in care.

Finally, the Sex Trafficking Prevention unit is working to improve data standards regarding missing youth, youth identified as high risk of a run episode, and youth in care who are at risk of trafficking and who have experienced human trafficking. Rachel will be attending the August quarterly meeting to share the unit's progress with the Task Force.

Child Advocacy Center Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CAC-CSEC) Program

With growing awareness and understanding of the complex problem of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) and their Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) partners nationally have been expanding their capacity to identify and respond to the needs of children and youth who may be at risk of, or are being recruited and exploited, including necessary protections and referrals to specialized services. To do so requires the development and implementation of relevant training, policies, and protocols that guide coordinated interdisciplinary screening, investigations and service delivery.

In 2023, the Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, received an appropriation from the Missouri General Assembly to establish a statewide CAC-CSEC program, a partnership between MO-NACA and four CACs who were selected competitively.

Goals of the project include:

- Building CAC core competencies in providing services to victims of CSEC including:

- The development of written protocols/guidelines, policies and procedures for a coordinated CAC/MDT response specific to CSEC cases;
- Specialized Forensic Interview (FI) training;
- Development of and training on screening and identification tools;
- Coalition building to provide a coordinated CSEC response for local community organizations and groups;
- CAC CSEC victim services such as interventions for victim advocates, Mental Health clinicians and/or SAFE-CARE providers
- Training Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) members to recognize the signs of CSEC crimes and understand the dynamics of working with these victims including:
 - Prosecuting attorneys who understand state statutes, laws and loopholes for prosecuting these cases;
 - Children's Division workers who understand how youth in care are more vulnerable and how to influence this social determinant;
 - Law enforcement who understand the special challenges of human trafficking cases;
 - Juvenile officers who identify children and youth at high risk
 - Mental health providers who are equipped to address the complex trauma these victims experience.

Beth Pierson, coordinator, is set to attend the May 2024 quarterly meeting to discuss the CSEC sites with the Task Force.

Linkage to the Court Improvement Program

The Task Force utilized Kimberly Abbott and Nancy Capps of the Office of State Courts Administrator (OSCA), to keep the Task Force informed about the progress of efforts, initiatives and programs being developed and implemented by the Court Improvement Program (CIP) and to ensure compliance with the CJA program instructions and 107(e) of CAPTA, and to further improve the collaboration efforts of the Task Force, with other groups and committees, which were developed to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect, as well as improving court programs.

The CIP partners with the Children's Division on projects, and assists local courts in work related to child abuse and neglect.

The Juvenile Court Improvement Project (JCIP) Steering Committee is a multidisciplinary child welfare committee comprised of state and local judges, Missouri's Title IV-E agency (Missouri Children's Division), CASA, a state Department of Education representative, key service providers, an Indian Tribal representative, and parents and youth with lived experience in the child welfare system. Meetings were held quarterly in 2023, and included: engaging in child welfare program planning and improvement efforts around the Court Improvement Program Strategic Plan and Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), and a joint review of child welfare data. In addition, meetings included discussions with Missouri's IV-E agency, the Missouri Children's Division, to determine how Court Improvement Programs can become meaningfully involved in these processes and ensure action.

The Partnership for Child Safety and Well-being (Partnership) continued their efforts to bring together the judiciary, juvenile office, child welfare agencies, advocates, and stakeholders to build effective and respectful working relationships that ensure children are safe, healthy, and thriving. The joint effort focuses on practice, policies, and data; and utilizes trainings and various information sharing techniques to engage staff across the state. Membership for the Partnership includes: a Justice of the Supreme Court, a leading juvenile officer, staff from the Department of Social Services and the

Office of State Courts Administrator, which includes the Court Improvement Program Coordinator. The Partnership met a total of six times in 2023.

In September, 2023, CIP funds were used to host the 2023 Partnership, Prevention, and Permanency Summits in Kansas City, Springfield, Cape Girardeau, and St. Louis. These summits included participation from multidisciplinary teams consisting of the judiciary, juvenile office, child welfare agencies, and attorneys to collaborate on ways to build partnerships, and improve outcomes for child safety and wellbeing. Presentations included prevention strategies, giving a voice to those with lived experience, legal sufficiency and permanency strategies, team engagement, and a breakout to review local data and to problem solve.

In addition, CIP funds were used to fund Fostering Court Improvement (FCI) initiatives, scholarships for child welfare partners and court staff to attend the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association Fall and Spring conferences, multidisciplinary trainings, and interpreter services to assist in providing meaningful access to juvenile and family courts specific to child welfare cases.

Linkage to Court and Legal Representation Improvement Work

The Task Force collaborated with the Missouri Office of Prosecuting Services (MOPS) to assist in funding for several trainings and conference opportunities for team members relating to the prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases. They are outlined below. The Task Force will continue to partner with MOPS in 2024 and 2025 to bring these much needed trainings to as many MDT members as possible.

Enhanced Response to Children and Families Impacted by Domestic Violence

Children's Division has begun developing a request for proposals around domestic violence/intimate partner violence training for agency staff, resource providers and older youth who are in care. Children's Division will be seeking a contractor to provide curriculum that would be provided in a one day, in person training for staff. The training for resource providers and older youth in care would be presented in an online format. The request is for the contractor to provide to an evidence-supported model that works to bring a clear understanding of how Domestic Violence can affect the overall dynamics of the families, including a prevention component to the Division's older youth population.

The Children's Division has partnered with Evident Change to implement Team Decision Making (TDM). Evident Change will be providing specialized training to all TDM Facilitators on best practices in handling concerns for domestic violence/intimate partner violence during Team Decision Making meetings. The training is two days and will be made available multiple times over the next three years.

5. 2023 FUND ALLOCATION

In 2023, the Task Force administered 15 projects and grants totaling \$242,844. These allocations and a summary of what they funded are detailed below.

Child and Family Services Review Support

Amount:
\$200

Grant funding from CJA was used to support the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) in several different ways. Funding was used to provide incentive to encourage parents to participate in case-related interviews during the CFSR in July, 2023. In addition to case-related interviews, parents who attended the CFSR stakeholder interviews with parents in person in Jefferson City were given a small stipend to assist with travel expenses. In November, 2023, funds were used to provide a stipend for parents who were able to attend the Program Improvement Plan kick-off in Columbia, Missouri.

Medical Evaluation of Child Maltreatment: Education to Improve MDT Child Protection Response

Amount:
\$16,912

The goal of this training was to develop and deliver a curriculum to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect by increasing Children's Division and multidisciplinary team knowledge of the medical forensic evaluation for suspected victims of child abuse and neglect. The project created a curriculum of online micro-lessons for basic knowledge and a complementary curriculum for in-person delivery of advanced topics. Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvements in cumulative knowledge scores after each education activity. Participants additionally reported statistically significant increases in their personal ratings of self-confidence in approaching medical information relevant to child maltreatment investigations. Statewide impact was achieved with delivery of educational content to Children's Division staff from urban and rural counties. Seven locations across the state were identified for training with 144 attendees in total.

Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) Spring Conference

Amount:
\$22,551

The Missouri Juvenile Justice Association provided five (5) plenary sessions as well as nineteen break-out workshops for professionals during the spring 2023 Educational Conference. Several plenary and workshop sessions were applicable to the requirement of the Missouri Task Force on Children Justice in that these seminars assisted various disciplines who work in the child welfare system to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases. The Task Force was able to assist with 40 scholarships for MDT members across the state to attend the conference. Overall, the evaluations were very positive with 65% of the attendees rating their conference experience as "Excellent", followed by 32% rating it as "Good", and 3% rating it as "Fair". Attendees noted that the information provided was relevant and useful to their positions. Of the attendees, 78% said the plenary and workshop sessions increased their knowledge of child welfare and juvenile justice.

Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) Fall Conference**Amount:
\$22,393**

The Missouri Juvenile Justice Association provided four (four) plenary and twenty (20) break-out sessions designed for those working within the juvenile justice and child welfare fields. Plenary and break-out sessions allowed workers to connect, collaborate, and acquire new strategies regarding the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect. This training allowed MDT members to receive training that created networking opportunities for further discussion and sharing of information which will lead to improved investigating and prosecutions of child abuse and neglect cases. The Task Force assisted with 40 scholarships for MDT members across to state to attend the conference. Eighty percent of the attendees reported that the conference workshops and plenary sessions increased their knowledge of juvenile justice and child welfare. Overall, 70% of attendees rated the conference as “Excellent” and 27% rated it as “Good”.

Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) Handle With Care Project**Amount:
\$2,995**

HANDLE WITH CARE is a program designed to ensure that children who are exposed to trauma in their home, school, or community receive appropriate interventions to help them succeed academically, divert them from insertion into the juvenile justice system, and reduce additional trauma to the child. HANDLE WITH CARE fits within the requirements set forth in the Children’s Justice Act, particularly in the area of reducing additional trauma to children who have been the direct victim of abuse or neglect or who have otherwise been subjected to trauma. As a recipient of Task Force Funding, MJJA purchased and launched the HANDLE WITH CARE website maintenance through May 2023. They also purchased the educational materials for participating schools so those materials could be distributed before the start of the 2023-2024 school year.

Currently, there are five (5) counties practicing Handle With Care MO and utilizing the electronic notification system, one (1) additional county trained prior to the 2023-24 school year and five (5) more counties prepping for training.

The Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst,: Training for Advocates Working with a Child Advocacy Center**Amount:
\$12,400**

MO-NACA coordinated a three-day Training for Advocates Working with a CAC, along with a half-day, hybrid Mind the Gap training, in October 2023 with 31 advocates attending training over the course of the week. First Witness Child Advocacy Center from Duluth Minnesota facilitated the training using training content approved by the National Children’s Alliance to meet the requirements of the Standards for Accreditation for CACs. The purpose of advocacy services in a CAC is to ensure a consistent and coordinated comprehensive network of support for each child and family. Accreditation standards for CACs require that all advocates have 24 hours of foundational training covering 12 core topic areas. Both advocates who are on staff at a CAC and those from outside organizations who serve on an MDT need this foundational training to ensure the needs of the family are met. Coordination among similarly trained advocates also ensures advocacy services are provided efficiently and without unnecessary duplication. Victim advocates must adhere to legal requirements on victims’ rights and professional ethics and boundaries. These specialized trainings gave advocates an understanding of the discipline and will allow them to fully participate in the MDT response.

Thirty-one advocates were trained on the need and role for advocacy as part of the multidisciplinary response. The overall feedback on evaluation surveys was extremely positive. Several advocates in the three-day training were in their first month of employment as an advocate, so the timing of the training aligned with their on-boarding. Some of these new

participants commented on early evaluations that their lack of experience limited their input into training activities and the facilitators modified the activities in days 2 and 3 to ensure the learning activities met the needs of participants. Participants in the Mind the Gap training specifically commented on how "good" it was and that it provided a valuable opportunity to refresh on the advocacy topics covered.

The Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, *ChildFirst*® Training in Springfield **Amount: \$43,825**

The Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, coordinated *ChildFirst*® to thirty-nine (39) individuals participated in the five-day training. Attendees included juvenile court officers, detectives, child/family victim advocates, other Child Advocacy Center (CAC) staff members, assistant prosecuting attorneys, law enforcement officers, Children's Division investigators, and forensic interviewers. The attendees received education on the benefits of using a multidisciplinary team approach to investigating child abuse/neglect allegations; age-appropriate, non-leading child interviewing techniques; and the research supporting the interviewing/investigative methods that were taught. Attendees practiced applying the *ChildFirst*® interviewing protocol and methods through mock forensic interviews. During these mock interviews, *ChildFirst*® Missouri faculty and the attendees peers filled out feedback forms to provide every participant with reflections on strengths and areas for improvement.

The Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, *ChildFirst*® Training **Amount: \$33,750**

The Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, coordinated *ChildFirst*® Missouri October 23-27, 2023. Thirty-five (35) individuals participated in the five-day training and thirty-four (34) received a certificate of completion. Attendees included juvenile court officers, detectives, child/family victim advocates, other Child Advocacy Center (CAC) staff members, assistant prosecuting attorneys, law enforcement officers, Children's Division investigators, forensic interviewers and other members of the MDT. The attendees received education on the benefits of using a multidisciplinary team approach to investigating child abuse/neglect allegations; age-appropriate, non-leading child interviewing techniques; and the research supporting the interviewing and investigative methods that were taught.

The overall feedback on evaluation surveys was positive. Participants specifically commented on the high level of expertise of the course faculty, the insights from watching recorded interviews to identify specific techniques and the practical applications of the material in the mock interview. Some participants would have liked more practice time or additional examples. MO-NACA continues to share the constructive feedback with faculty and the course creator, Zero Abuse Project, for them to consider for future course updates.

The Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, MDT Enhancement Initiative **Amount: \$23,322**

This MDT Enhancement Initiative Strategic Plan Implementation proposal starts a multi-year project based on feedback and identified needs of MDTs across Missouri. This proposal is for the first year (12 months) of strategic plan implementation. During this time, the MDT Enhancement Program Specialist will cultivate the role of the MDT Facilitator at CACs, provide professional support for a training ecosystem and pilot team-building activities to create alignment and role clarity among MDT members. The goal of this grant is to improve the MDT response to child abuse by increasing the capacity and coordination of MDTs through a multi-year MDT

Enhancement Initiative which will improve effective team functioning statewide and increase access to services for children impacted by abuse. The long-term vision for the project is that all to ensure MDTs will have the resources they need to effectively serve children and families across the state.

Four pilot sites have been identified and meet monthly as a group so that they may share updates, discuss plans and also regularly connect with one another. As a group, they have been reviewing and providing feedback on the previously created MDT Basics module. This included a discussion on the materials as well as experiences of those who helped create and provide the training. The group generally agreed that having a standardized MDT training would be beneficial to them. Program Coordinator Audrey Leonard emphasized the need for sustainability regarding training resources and her desire to provide this from the Chapter. The group has also been sharing team building strategies and efforts.

This is a multi-year project with on-going activities.

Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (MOPS) Family and Sexual Violence Conference	Amount: \$7,406
---	----------------------------

The Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (“MOPS”) received Children’s Justice Act funding for scholarships that allowed up to 25 child abuse professionals to attend MOPS’s 2023 Family and Sexual Violence Conference (“FSV”). The purpose of this conference was to provide training to multi-disciplinary team (“MDT”) members in Missouri on a variety of topics relating to the MDT response to crimes against children.

Funding provided by the Children’s Justice Act allowed professionals from all across Missouri to join together to learn information on how to enhance investigations and prosecutions of crimes against children. Twenty participants who would not have had the means to attend the conference but for CJA funding were taught on a wide array of topics and given the opportunity to cultivate their learning experience with information that best suited their individual professional needs. While the target number of scholarships were not met, the most important objective—increased knowledge in various areas of investigating and prosecuting crimes against children—was met with flying colors. The geographical diversity of the attendees indicates that these professionals will bring their knowledge from the FSV Conference back to multi-disciplinary teams across the state, some of which may not otherwise have access to this knowledge. Allied professionals in Missouri would benefit from scholarship awards to the FSV Conference in future years to continue the advancement of knowledge in investigating and prosecuting crimes against children.

Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (MOPS) Sexual Abuse Trial School	Amount: \$17,527
---	-----------------------------

The Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (MOPS) received Children’s Justice Act funding to hold a Child Sexual Abuse Trial School (“CSATS”) in the 2023 calendar year. The purpose of CSATS was to provide training to prosecutors, law enforcement, Children’s Division, forensic interviewers, and medical professionals in Missouri on various topics relating to child sexual abuse investigations and accompanying prosecutions from the inception of an investigation, to making a charging decision, to participating in a criminal trial. After receiving this training, groups of students participated in various aspects of a mock child sexual abuse trial using a fact pattern pulled from a real criminal case.

Funding provided by the Children’s Justice Act allowed multi-disciplinary team professionals from all across Missouri to join together to learn about successful investigations and prosecutions of

child sexual abuse cases. Participants were taught on a wide array of topics and given the opportunity to demonstrate their learned trial skills during practical labs. All objectives desired for this training were met and even exceeded. Allied professionals in Missouri would benefit from continuing to hold CSATS each year to further the advancement of successful prosecutions for sexual crimes against children.

Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (MOPS) Child Abuse Statewide Trainings

**Amount:
\$1,113**

Trainings will be determined throughout the calendar year 2023. The goal of these trainings is to improve the investigation, prosecutorial response, and victim advocate assistance to physical and sexual child abuse crimes by increasing the expertise of professionals in the preparation and execution of child abuse cases, from investigation to trial.

Funding provided by the Children’s Justice Act allowed professionals from across Missouri to join together in various sessions to learn information on how to enhance investigations and prosecutions of crimes against children. A total of 183 MDT members across the state were taught on a wide array of topics over six sessions. The geographical locations of the trainings were spread out to ensure that MDT members across Missouri had access to the information that MOPS and its co-trainers have to share. Allied professionals in Missouri would benefit from funding for trainings in future years to continue the advancement of knowledge in investigating and prosecuting crimes against children.

Show Me a Helping Hand Conference—CJA Task Force Sponsored

**Amount:
\$27,680**

The 6th Annual Show Me a Helping Hand Conference was held November 2-3, 2023, at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri. Thirty scholarships for two-night hotel room and board were given out to attendees who registered. The conference had over 200 attendees. The two-day conference covered topics that included male survivors of sexual abuse, sexual abuse and trauma, human trafficking, and various other topics. The Task Force’s own member, Greg Holtmeyer once again spoke at the conference about Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse. A newcomer to the conference, Kevin McNeil, presented on collaboration in child abuse cases. Dr. James Smith introduced EMDR Therapy to attendees and Terry Wilson gave a demonstration, as well as had volunteers, to practice a session of Trauma Sensitive Yoga. The conference provided free CEUs and POST credit to qualifying attendees.

Projector

**Amount:
\$870**

The Task Force approved funding for a projector to assist facilitator at quarterly meetings as well as child abuse and neglect trainings held statewide. The facilitator is also a Program Specialist in Child Abuse and Neglect for the Missouri Children’s Division and provides trainings, workshops, and on-site assistance to field investigators and other staff members. Trainings held this past year included assessing safety in investigations and temporary alternative placement agreements during investigations.

WithInsight

**Amount:
\$9900**

WithInsight worked with the Task Force to implement the internal recommendations generated through the three-year assessment. The firm gathered feedback from stakeholders about the application process and gauged openness to a shared measurement system across grantees. In 2023, WithInsight helped the Task Force improve its grant application based on the feedback.

WithInsight introduced shared outputs and outcomes that grantees are required to report on, and WithInsight reviewed the first round of reports, providing feedback to grantees if data was missing. Finally, WithInsight provided guidance on how to update the Task Force's annual report template to be more relevant and effective.

6. PROPOSED 2024 ACTIVITIES

APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Compliance with Section 107 (e) (1) (A) and (B):

In 2024, the Finance Committee will continue meeting quarterly to review grant applications, monitor expenditures, and evaluate the use of CJA funds. The Finance Committee will continue to support the improvement of the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect by recommending the funding of grants from programs designed to improve the investigative response and the prosecution of child abuse and neglect. The Task Force will focus on funding projects aligned with the Task Force's recommendations for systemic improvement. The Task Force will continue to align its efforts with training aimed at growing strong and healthy MDTs.

The Goal Committee will take data and recommendations taken from the 2022 Three-Year Assessment and work with WithInsight to develop the 2025 Three-Year Assessment. The Goal Committee has made recommendations to continue with collaborating with WithInsight to work on evaluation methods for future grantees and also to update the grant process, which in turn will improve trainings that are funded by the Task Force. The Goal Committee is also eager to continue work with MO-NACA on the approved MDT Enhancement Initiative as described in the next section. The Goal Committee will meet as needed to ensure progress toward our goals.

Compliance with Section 107 (e) (1) (C):

To remain in compliance with the reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols and procedures to protect children from abuse, the Legislative Committee will continue to follow legislation pertinent to the work of the Task Force. It will determine whether the pursuit of legislative proposals to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect may be appropriate in the coming year.

In 2024, the Recruitment Committee will continue to ensure the Task Force is at full membership and remains in compliance with Section 107(c)(1) of CAPTA. The Recruitment committee will also continue to work on ways to promote the work of the Task Force that would attract the interests of qualified persons to fill future vacancies.

Proposed activities for the Task Force and projects approved for 2024 CJA funding include, but are not limited to, the following projects:

Task Force on Children's Justice Operating Expenses and Projects	Est. Cost:
	\$10,000

Funding is needed to support and maintain the activities, correspondence, teleconferences, quarterly meetings of the Task Force, meetings of Task Force subcommittees, and attendance for a minimum of two persons at a CJA annual conference.

Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri 16th Annual Justice for Children Conference	Est. Cost:
	\$45,000

This conference is intended to teach, empower and inspire each person to continue in the fight to end child abuse and exploitation and be better equipped to make a positive difference for

every child served. Specifically, the conference will demonstrate best practices for MDT professionals and service providers to families impacted by abuse, improve coordinated investigations, increase the understanding of mental health, develop the capacity of MDTs to investigate and manage the judicial handling of child abuse cases, promote collaborative approaches between community agencies and improve other aspects of the MDT response to handling child abuse and neglect cases, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation.

The goal is for 175 people to attend the conference. The target audience includes social workers, law enforcement, clergy, mental health professionals, educators, physicians, nurses, counselors, advocates, CASA, attorneys, health care providers, foster parents and case managers. The conference attracts participants throughout Missouri and adjoining states. The grant will cover the cost of 150 qualified scholarship recipients.

Children’s Mercy Hospital Child Protector App Upgrades

Est. Cost:

\$189,926

The purpose of this grant application is to improve the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child physical abuse, as well as child fatalities, in a manner that reduces trauma to the child and family, by adding new content to the existing Child Protector App and modernizing the hosting platform to a progressive web app. Child Protector is a Missouri-developed free app in the Apple and Google Play (currently not functioning) stores that uses animation, real images, decision-trees and professional narration to improve the multidisciplinary evaluation of cases of possible serious physical abuse. A Missouri-based project developed using Missouri Children’s Justice Act Funding, Child Protector is used in all 50 states and in over 50 foreign countries with more than 30,000 global users and more than 3000 users in Missouri.

The Child Protector App is currently accessed through the Apple App store and Google Play stores. The current application structure and hosting mechanisms require continuous (annual) maintenance and updating to satisfy the requirements of the App and Play stores. The cost of this annual maintenance has been funded through prior CJA grants and supported through philanthropic efforts at Children’s Mercy. However, the time and cost requirements of these annual updates are becoming prohibitive. A more permanent solution involves modernizing the coding and hosting of the applications (“technical stack”) to allow for simple, essentially cost-free maintenance and updating. Child Protector will be a “progressive web app” as opposed to a mobile application. This will allow the app creators to manage the app without costly technical assistance. Users of Child Protector will still be able to access the app in the same manner (a direct link on their smartphone screen, just like an app). An additional benefit is that Child Protector will be easily accessible to any smartphone user, as opposed to only those with access to the Apple or Google Play Store.

Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) Handle With Care Project (HWC)

Est. Cost:

\$44,745

HANDLE WITH CARE is a program designed to ensure that children who are exposed to trauma in their home, school, or community receive appropriate interventions to help them succeed academically, divert them from insertion into the juvenile justice system, and reduce additional trauma to the child. HANDLE WITH CARE fits within the requirements set forth in the Children’s Justice Act, particularly in the area of reducing additional trauma to children who have been the direct victim of abuse or neglect or who have otherwise been subjected to trauma.

Currently, there are five (5) counties practicing Handle With Care MO and utilizing the electronic notification system, one (1) additional county trained prior to the 2023-24 school year and five (5) more counties prepping for training. In addition to these sites, MJJA receives numerous inquiries to discuss or present HWC. With funding for the School Response Coordinator position expiring, they are concerned that without additional funding support, the enthusiasm and momentum behind statewide implementation will dissipate. The Task Force's grant funding support would allow the project to continue and funds to support the School Response Coordinator's work in assisting schools and law enforcement in establishing HWC in their respective counties, provide training, and update/monitor the previously funded HWC website.

Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) Spring Conference **Est. Cost: \$21,736**

MJJA is seeking assistance in funding forty scholarships to the MJJA 2025 Spring Conference as well as paying the faculty speaking fee for one of the plenary speakers whose topic falls within the scope of the Task Force's mission. Victor Vieth with Zero Abuse Project will present a plenary session followed by a workshop. Funding for conference scholarships will cover the registration fee and two nights of lodging for awardees. MJJA attempts to award the scholarships to Children's Division staff, law enforcement, CASA, juvenile officers, guardians ad litem, attorneys for juvenile officers, prosecuting attorneys, as well as child advocates and CAC staff.

The Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, *ChildFirst*® EX: Expanded Forensic Interview Process Training and Train the Trainer **Est. Cost: \$16,218**

MO-NACA is requesting funding to improve child abuse/neglect investigations through the provision of advanced training for forensic interviewers regarding the purpose and process for adapting any forensic interview protocol to meet the needs of children who may not succeed in a traditional, single-session forensic interview. As part of this advanced training, MO-NACA will have new faculty trained to provide *ChildFirst*® EX in Missouri through a train-the-trainer (TOT).

Due to trauma, development, special needs or other complicating issues, such as poly-victimization, some children may not succeed in a standard, single forensic interview that is consistent with most interview protocols. The *ChildFirst*® EX: Expanded Interview Process training teaches experienced interviewers an interview process that accommodates a child's individual needs through multiple, non-duplicative sessions. The training includes a review of the *ChildFirst*® Forensic Interviewing Protocol; a discussion about when and why an expanded process may be indicated; an in-depth description of the *ChildFirst*® EX forensic interview process; a review of research that supports the use of multiple, non-duplicative interviews with child victims and witnesses; and a full day for participants to practice the new skills being taught and receive expert feedback.

The Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, MDT Enhancement Initiative **Est. Cost: \$101,678**

This is a multi-year project broken down into phases. This proposal continues the work for the first year (12 months) of strategic plan implementation into the next phase. During this time, the MDT Enhancement Program Specialist will cultivate the role of the MDT Facilitator at CACs, provide professional support for a training ecosystem and pilot team-building activities

to create alignment and role clarity among MDT members. The goal of this grant is to improve the MDT response to child abuse by increasing the capacity and coordination of MDTs through a multi-year MDT Enhancement Initiative which will improve effective team functioning statewide and increase access to services for children impacted by abuse. The long-term vision for the project is that all MDTs have the resources they need to effectively serve children and families across the state.

The first year of the strategic plan has three priorities to address these issues: 1. Building a Training Ecosystem, 2. MDT Team-Building, and 3. Creating a robust Facilitator Toolbox to cultivate the role of the MDT Facilitator at CACs. The MDT Pilot sites focused in on MDT Team-Building as the highest of these three priorities. The first core objective is to assist 3-5 pilot MDTs with clarity of purpose, structured methods for evaluating success, and opportunities to learn together. The second is to develop a set of tools to ensure that people serving in MDT Facilitator roles can be successful and meet the NCA Accreditation Standards for CACs.

The Missouri Network Against Child Abuse (MO-NACA), formerly Missouri KidsFirst, *ChildFirst*® Spring Training **Est. Cost: \$41,729**

The purpose of this proposal is to improve the investigation of child sexual abuse by providing training to multidisciplinary team members on the dynamics of child sexual abuse cases, considerations for interviewing children about an alleged incident, and the *ChildFirst*® Forensic Interviewing Protocol. The goal of this grant is to improve the investigative response to child sexual abuse by increasing the expertise of professionals addressing the investigation, treatment and prosecution of cases of child sexual abuse. These goals will be achieved through this interactive, intensive training that combines lecture with hands on experience. From the pre-course materials on linguistics, child development, memory, suggestibility and other pertinent topics, to required-reading in the form of homework each day, students are expected to study a significant amount of literature relating to child sexual abuse.

Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (MOPS) Child Sexual Abuse Trial School 2024 **Est. Cost: \$25,025**

The purpose of this grant proposal is to improve the investigation and prosecution of child sexual abuse by offering training to prosecutors and other multi-disciplinary team members in the investigation and preparation of criminal cases for sexual crimes against children. The grant will assist in funding scholarships for 65 MDT members for this two-day training. Regular training and assistance are imperative due to a high turnover of personnel within prosecution, law enforcement, and social services agencies, as well as the current lack of coordinated community responses to child abuse. There is a statewide need in Missouri for the continuous provision of high-quality training to MDTs responding to child abuse cases. There is a continued need for additional educated, competent individuals who can investigate, prosecute, and provide support services on these specialized and sensitive cases, but the budget to train these individuals does not exist in many localities, especially in rural counties in Missouri.

Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (MOPS) Family and Sexual Violence (FSV) Conference **Est. Cost: \$19,518**

The purpose of this grant proposal is to improve the investigation and prosecution of physical and sexual child abuse cases by offering training to prosecutors, law enforcement, forensic interviewers, Children’s Division investigators, victim advocates, and other multi-disciplinary

team members in the investigation and preparation of criminal trials for crimes against children. The goal of this training is to improve the investigation, prosecutorial response, and victim advocate assistance to physical and sexual child abuse by increasing the expertise of professionals in the preparation and execution of child abuse cases, from investigation to trial. MOPS requests funding for 25 scholarships for trainees to attend a multi-day conference on educating prosecutors, law enforcement, medical providers, Children’s Division investigators, mental health providers, victim advocates, and forensic interviewers in the investigation and prosecution of physical and sexual crimes against children. The MOPS FSV plans to cover topics such as: trial skills in special victims’ cases, artificial intelligence and its effect on abuse and exploitation, handling cases in a trauma informed way, strategies for strengthening depositions in special victims’ cases, forensic interviewing in human trafficking investigations, and suspicious death investigations techniques and practices, among others.

Missouri Office of Prosecution Services (MOPS) Child Abuse Statewide Trainings 2024

**Est. Cost:
\$7,844**

The goal of these trainings is to improve the investigation and prosecutorial response to physical and sexual child abuse crimes, as well as child fatalities by increasing the expertise of professionals in the preparation and execution of child abuse and fatality cases, from investigation to trial. Up to sixteen initial dates will be scheduled throughout the calendar year 2024. The rest of the dates will be subject to scheduling through the jurisdiction who requests the training. There has been an additional request to schedule this training in West Plains. MOPS is working with the hosting agency to get a location and date booked. The two topics that will be covered by these classes are: 1. Investigating Child Fatalities and 2. Investigating and Prosecuting of Physical and Sexual Child Abuse. There is a potential that different topics may be covered in one or more of these trainings, as the Child Abuse Resource Prosecutor has a variety of curriculum available to teach on depending on the needs of the jurisdictions who are scheduling the trainings. However, MOPS anticipates these two trainings will be the most requested trainings of the 2024 year for the Child Abuse Resource Prosecutor.

WithInsight

**Est. Cost:
\$9,900**

WithInsight will work with the Task Force to conduct its next three-year assessment. The firm will be engaged to support data collection and analysis as well as facilitate the Task Force through a meaning making process. This will lead to a better understanding of statewide needs and generate recommendations that will guide the next phase of work for the Task Force.

7. ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: MEMBER BIOS

Name	Bio
Leanne Reese (Court Appointed Special Advocate Representative)	Leanne Reese serves as the Executive Director of the Missouri Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association. She has worked for Missouri CASA for 12 years and previously served as the Deputy Director. Leanne graduated cum laude with her undergraduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1992. She continued her education by earning her Juris Doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1997. After law school Leanne worked as an attorney with Richards, Layton, and Finger, P.A. in Wilmington, Delaware.
Kelly Schultz (Parent Representative) <i>Terming out March 2024</i>	Kelly Schultz currently works for the University of Missouri and was formerly the Director of the Policy and Partnerships for the Missouri State Alliance of YMCAs. Previously, Kelly was the Child Advocate for the State of Missouri for ten years and spent twelve years working in the Missouri State Capitol. In addition to her public policy experience, Kelly served as the President of the Boone County Foster Parent Support Group; was a house parent at the Rainbow House, an emergency shelter for children; and volunteered at the Women's Shelter. Kelly and her husband are foster/adoptive parents and have helped to raise 17 children throughout the years. Kelly received her undergraduate degree in Political Science and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Missouri.
Judge Hugh C. Harvey (Circuit Judge)	Hugh C. Harvey is a life-long resident of Saline County, Missouri. In 1981, he graduated from Oral Roberts University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management and Business Administration. In 1985, he graduated from Drake University with a Juris Doctorate in law and a Master of Business Administration degree. Judge Harvey began a private practice and in 1986 was appointed prosecuting attorney for Saline County. He served as prosecuting attorney until 2000 when he was appointed associate circuit judge for Saline County and continues to serve in that role. He is a member of Missouri Bar Association, the Saline County Bar Association, and The Missouri Association of Probate and Associate Circuit Judges.

<p>Rick Gaines (Family Court Representative)</p>	<p>Rick Gaines graduated from Lincoln University in 1986 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. He began his professional career in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit as a Detention Deputy Juvenile Officer in 1986. Rick served in different positions in the Thirteenth Circuit including Chief Deputy Juvenile Officer, Chief Juvenile Officer, and superintendent of the local juvenile detention center. Rick retired from the Thirteenth Circuit in 2016 after a 30 year career and went to work for the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) as the Disproportionate Minority Coordinator for the State of Missouri. In March of 2017, Rick became the Chief Juvenile Officer for the Twenty-First Judicial Circuit. Rick has served on several statewide committees that have helped shape Missouri's Juvenile Justice work, including the Missouri Juvenile Officer Performance Standards. Rick has a passion and commitment to the important work that impacts Missouri's youth and families.</p>
<p>Greg Holtmeyer (Adult Former Child Victim)</p>	<p>Greg Holtmeyer is the Access and Abilities Coordinator at Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri and his Master of Science degree in Elementary Education from the University of St. Mary's, Leavenworth, Kansas. Greg was the victim of physical and sexual child abuse at a very young age. Greg has responded to his victimization by speaking about the impact and trauma openly, and providing professional presentations to organizations serving children and families all over the United States.</p>
<p>Christopher Jensen (Family Attorney) Co-Chair</p>	<p>Christopher Jensen is a partner at Baylard, Billington, Dempsey, Jensen, Struzzi & Piontek, P.C. located in Union, Missouri, where he has practiced law since 1995. He graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia receiving his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree with an emphasis in marketing in 1992 and his Juris Doctorate in 1995. Chris has been particularly involved in the juvenile court system in Franklin County over the past 20+ years. In addition to his representation of hundreds of parents, he has been a court approved Guardian ad Litem since 2010. Chris also serves as Chairman of the Franklin County Children and Families Community Resource Board, which administers over \$3 million in annual tax revenue for non-profit services within the county. He is a member of the Fostering Court Improvement team of the 20th Judicial Circuit. He also serves as an elected member of the Union Ambulance District Board of Directors.</p>
<p>Sheriff Clay Chism (Law Enforcement Community)</p>	<p>Clay Chism is the Callaway County Sheriff. Clay is in his 24th year of service at the Callaway County Sheriff's Office and was elected Sheriff in November 2016. During a past assignment as the Investigations Division supervisor, Clay</p>

	oversaw numerous child abuse and neglect investigations. Clay received his Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Central Missouri-Warrensburg, and his Master of Science in Criminal Justice Administration degree from Columbia College, in Columbia, Missouri. Clay is an active member of the Callaway County Child Fatality Review Panel and also serves on various state committees involving child abuse, neglect, and fatalities.
Chief Bill Carson (Law Enforcement Community) <i>Terming Out March 2024</i>	Bill Carson is the Chief of Police for the Maryland Heights Police Department. He has forty years of experience as a police officer in the St. Louis metropolitan area, and has served sixteen years in criminal investigation units as a detective, a supervisor and eventually a commander. He is a graduate of the F.B.I. National Academy and holds a Master's Degree in Criminology & Criminal Justice from the University of Missouri – St. Louis. In 2011, Chief Carson was appointed by Missouri Governor Jay Nixon to serve as a member of the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis, and is a member of the Missouri State Child Fatality Review Panel. Chief Carson has written several articles and taught police officers, prosecutors and social service workers on topics related to the investigation of child sexual abuse.
Dr. James Anderst (Health Professional) <i>Terming out March 2024</i>	Dr. James Anderst is a board certified Child Abuse Pediatrician and Director of the Division of Child Adversity and Resilience at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. He is also a Professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine in Kansas City, Missouri. Dr. Anderst completed medical school at the Medical College of Wisconsin, a residency at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, and fellowship and Master's Degree at the University of Texas Health Science Center. Dr. Anderst has created educational tools for medical providers and legal investigators that are in use nationally and internationally. Dr. Anderst has published numerous peer-reviewed studies and book chapters regarding child maltreatment, and provides educational and research lectures nationally.
Stacey Goodwin (Persons Working with Children With Disabilities)	Stacey Goodwin has been with the Department of Mental Health (DMH)/Division of Developmental Disabilities for 29 years. She supervises a team of 14 service coordinators for St. Charles County. She was recently nominated and attended the DMH Leadership Academy. Stacey has been the System of Care lead for many years and strives to work together with many agencies to build great wrap-around services for families in need. She volunteers to be a 3 rd party reviewer for Children Division's Permanency Planning Review Team Meetings. Stacey is a member of

	the Fostering Court Improvement Board to bring information about Developmental Disabilities to that team.
Lisa Mizell (Child Advocate) Co-Chair	Lisa Mizell has worked in the field of social services most of her professional career spanning over 25 years. She worked directly with child abuse and neglect cases while at the CASA of Lake County, Indiana and the Fredericksburg, Virginia Department of Social Services. Lisa is currently the CEO of the Child Protection Center (CPC), the child advocacy center serving Jackson and Cass Counties. The CPC serves over 800 children a year, all of whom have allegedly been victims of child abuse or witnessed violent crime. In addition, while serving as the Executive Director of Amethyst Place, Lisa worked with women who were in recovery and their children. All residents were homeless prior to admission. She started her career at LifeSkills in St. Louis, Missouri, and later worked as a case manager for the Department of Mental Health--St. Louis Regional Center for Developmental Disabilities.
Jill Groff-Rosloniec (Parent/Child Attorney)	Jill Groff-Rosloniec is currently in her ninth year working with the juvenile courts as a guardian ad litem (GAL). For the past seven years, she has worked exclusively as a GAL in abuse and neglect cases for three counties in Missouri. Recently, she has moved to practicing family law as well as maintaining her GAL caseload.
Russell (Russ) Dempsey (Defense Attorney)	Russell Dempsey is employed as a partner at the law firm of MRD Lawyers. Russ graduated from Central Missouri State University with his Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice. He then received his Juris Doctorate from Washburn Law School. Russ began his legal career with the Greene County Prosecutor's office in May of 2002. Russ left the prosecutor's office to form MRD Lawyers in 2014. Currently, Russ is a criminal defense attorney who handles cases in and around Springfield, Missouri.
Rachel Jones (Mental Health Professional)	Rachel Jones is the Manager of Trauma Informed Treatment with the Department of Mental Health, Division of Behavioral Health. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology with a Minor in Black Studies and a Master's Degree in Educational, School and Counseling Psychology from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor. She provides state-wide training, consultation, and technical assistance on implementation of clinical best practices and organizational change through trauma informed policies, procedures, practices and partnerships. She is a POST Certified instructor and provides trauma informed law enforcement and juvenile justice training. She has over 15 years of experience working with child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, substance use and mental health disorders with children, youth, and adults. She is a member of Missouri Alliance for Dual Diagnosis and co-authored an article in

	<p>the professional journal, <i>Current Psychiatry Reports</i>. Rachel is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Interdisciplinary Research Leader Fellow and an Adjunct Instructor for Columbia College.</p>
<p>Lindsey Parton (Experienced in working with homeless children and youth-as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a))</p>	<p>Lindsey Parton, MSW, LCSW, began her career in social work over 15 years ago while employed as a Community Support Specialist. She grew to love the ever-changing environment and welcomed the challenges and successes of the field, which led her to her current position. Lindsey serves as a District Social Worker for Marshall Public Schools in Marshall, MO. She enjoys working with students and families and has a targeted focus on assisting those who are living in McKinney-Vento educationally defined homeless situations. Lindsey has a community-integrated approach, building partnerships and involvement with many groups and organizations. She has served as a board member for the Community Food Pantry, Pinwheels for Prevention (Child Abuse Prevention), the Saline County Inter-Agency Council, as well as co-founded a non-profit homeless shelter for young women. Lindsey currently serves on the board for the Mental Health Association of Saline County, and the Saline County Holiday Project. She received her Master's in Social Work from the University of Missouri-Columbia and in 2017, became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She opened her own counseling practice in 2022 to help better serve her community.</p>
<p>Dr. Terra Frazier (Health Professional)</p>	<p>Dr. Frazier is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics in the Division of Childhood Adversity and Resilience at Children's Mercy Hospital/ University of Missouri- Kansas City School of Medicine in Kansas City, Missouri. She completed medical school at Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine, followed by residency and fellowship at Children's Mercy Hospital. She is board certified in General Pediatrics and Child Abuse Pediatrics. Dr. Frazier works full time in the field of Child Abuse Pediatrics both inpatient and outpatient, providing care that encompasses the full range of child abuse pediatrics. She serves on numerous multi-disciplinary teams related to child protection in Kansas and Missouri, including past appointment to the Attorney General of KS Human Trafficking Task Force, current appointment to the MO State Child Abuse and Neglect Review Board, participation on CAC advisory boards, county MDT review panels and the MO State Child Fatality Review Panel. These experiences have allowed her to participate in building partnerships among multidisciplinary team members increasing the ability to improve outcomes for the children of Missouri.</p>
<p>The Honorable Tracy Gonzalez (Family Court Judge)</p>	<p>Judge Tracy Z. Gonzalez was elected to the Boone County Court in 2018 as an Associate Circuit Judge over</p>

	<p>Division IX. Division IX handles juvenile (abuse and neglect and delinquency), criminal and order of protection (adult and child) dockets. Judge Gonzalez is a graduate of the Saint Louis University, School of Law, and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in education from the University of Wisconsin.</p>
<p>Jerilyn “JJ” Gossrau (Mental Health Professional)</p>	<p>JJ Gossrau, MSW, LCSW, Director of Young Adult Services at the Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH), coordinates the development and implementation of statewide initiatives, policies, and procedures under the Director of Children’s Services for the Department of Mental Health. Prior to her current role, Ms. Gossrau provided clinical coordination for Community Operations in the Division of Behavioral Health, and worked as a residential social worker providing individual, group, and family therapy to young people and their families at Hawthorn Children’s Psychiatric Hospital. She has also provided evidence based fidelity services for Integrated Treatment as a Research Specialist at the Missouri Institute of Mental Health. Her professional interests include effectively supporting young adults in transition, social and educational inclusion for youth and young adults with disabilities and early identification and intervention for youth and young adults experiencing early signs and symptoms of mental illness, with a special focus on early psychosis. She earned a Bachelor Degree at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan and a Master Degree in Social Work with an emphasis on mental health and non-profit management at the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.</p>
<p>Pinkie Maxell (Child Protection Agency)</p>	<p>Pinkie Maxwell is a Field Support Manager for the Children’s Division in the St. Louis Region. Ms. Maxwell supervises the child abuse and neglect units in St. Louis City and County. She has worked for the Children’s Division for over 20 years.</p>
<p>Aimee Meyer (Social Worker/Child Advocate)</p>	<p>Aimee Meyer is a Community Advocate-Juvenile Justice with Centene (Show Me Healthy Kids with Home State Health). She graduated with a BSW from MacMurray College in 1996 and an MSW with a concentration in Children, Families and Youth from the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in 2000. She is currently working towards an MBA in Healthcare Administration from the University of Central Missouri. Aimee was previously a Deputy Juvenile Officer II with the 22nd Judicial Circuit Court in both Child Protection and Domestic Relations as a Divorce Mediator. Aimee was also a Child Protection Specialist with the State of Illinois. Aimee is a former licensed foster parent with the State of Missouri and has two adopted children from the Missouri foster care system.</p>

Ben Butler (Prosecuting Attorney)	Ben Butler is the Cass County Missouri Prosecuting Attorney, first elected in 2014. Ben grew up on a family farm near Bethany, Missouri, attended Mizzou undergrad and earned his law degree from UMKC School of Law. He worked in private practice as a criminal defense attorney prior to election as prosecutor. He resides in Lee's Summit with his wife Jodi and four children
Jan Zimmerman (Law Enforcement)	Jan Zimmerman has served in law enforcement in the Kansas City Metropolitan area for over 43 years, including serving as Chief of Police in Raymore, Missouri, from 2012-2022. Ms. Zimmerman currently is the Director of the Surviving Spouse and Family Endowment for the KC Metropolitan Crime Commission. She was appointed by Governor Parson to the Missouri Gaming Commission in July 2021 and also appointment chairman by Governor Parson in July 2023. Ms. Zimmerman was named Missouri Police Chief of the Year in 2021.
Dr. Adrienne Atzemis (Health Care Provider)	Dr. Adrienne Atzemis has served as a health care provider to child victims of maltreatment since 1996. Her experience includes serving as a Child Abuse Pediatrician and Medical Director of hospital and CAC-based Child Protection medical teams. She is also employed as teaching faculty to train medical providers and child abuse investigators both regionally and nationally. She participates in several activities directly associated with the CJA Task Force mission, including child maltreatment investigations and prosecution, as well as child fatality review panel and the child abuse and neglect review panel.

